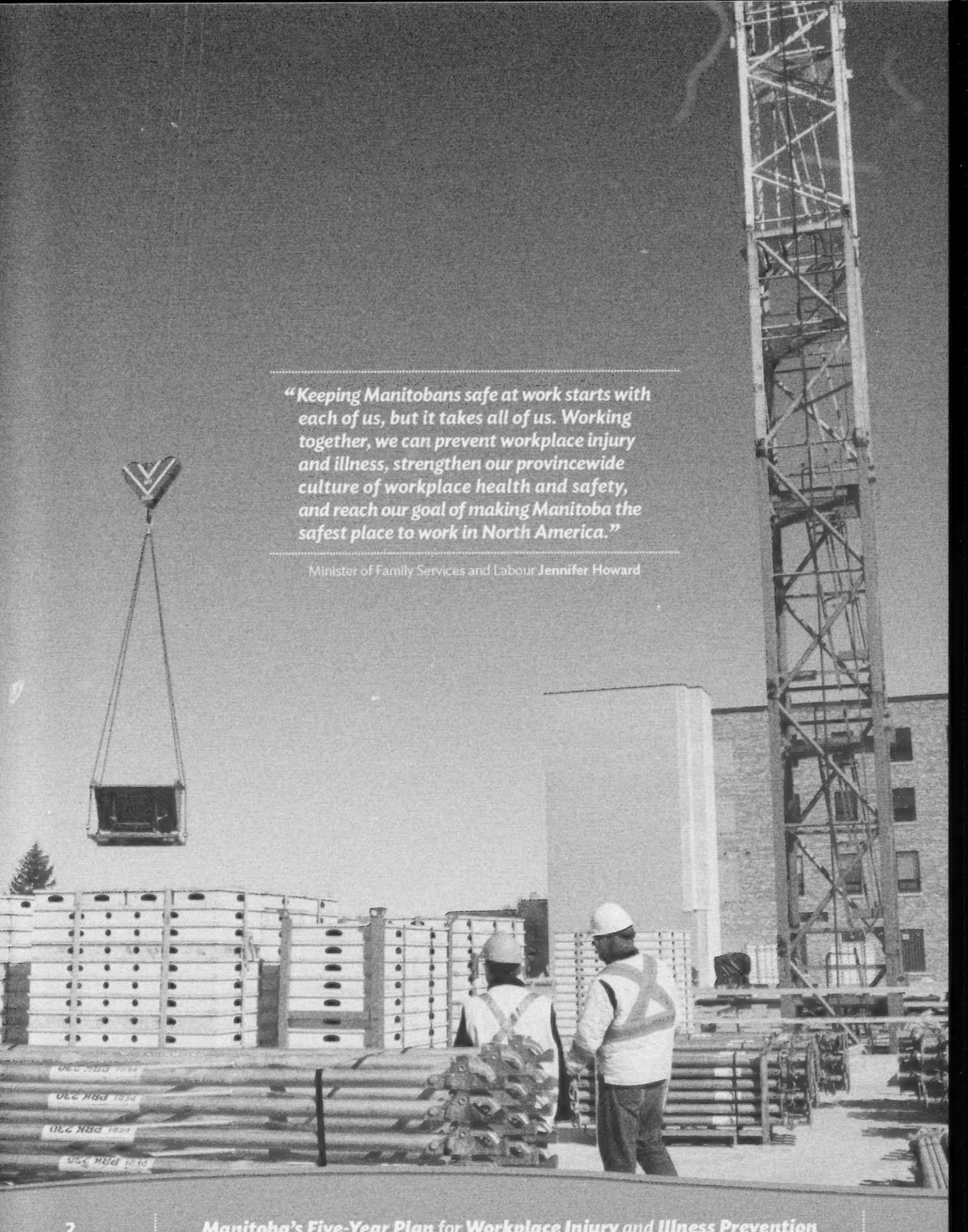


Manitoba 



“Keeping Manitobans safe at work starts with each of us, but it takes all of us. Working together, we can prevent workplace injury and illness, strengthen our provincewide culture of workplace health and safety, and reach our goal of making Manitoba the safest place to work in North America.”

Minister of Family Services and Labour **Jennifer Howard**

Message from the Minister



Every worker has the right to a safe and healthy workplace. Every family has the right to expect that a loved one will return home safely at the end of each shift.

Since 2000 our government has more than doubled its investment in making Manitoba a safer place to work. Workplace inspections have increased while the injury rate has fallen. New awareness programs have strengthened the culture of workplace safety while updated legislation has ensured our province has kept pace with evolving workplace practices, technologies and trends.

Manitoba's Five-Year Plan for Workplace Injury and Illness Prevention is a focused strategy to build on our province's protections for Manitoba workers. The improvements and reforms in this document will better prevent Manitobans from getting hurt or sick on the job and affirm our government's commitment to making Manitoba a nationally recognized health and safety leader.

This blueprint for change stems from the most extensive consultation on workplace safety in more than a decade. I extend my genuine thanks to the employer organizations, labour bodies, health and safety associations and individual Manitobans who offered their insight and advice on every aspect of occupational safety and prevention.

Creating a genuine culture of workplace safety and prevention takes every one of us. It takes employers, labour organizations and individual workers. It takes effective training programs, a prevention-focused workers' compensation system and modern, responsive laws. It takes parents talking to their kids, and it takes a renewed conversation around injury and illness prevention from the company boardroom to the factory floor.

The 10 action areas set out in this plan will create system-wide improvements that will benefit both workers and employers across our province. These actions will result in improved services, greater accountability and a system that ensures fairness for all. *Manitoba's Five-Year Plan for Workplace Injury and Illness Prevention* redoubles our focus on effective prevention and underscores our continued commitment to ensuring Manitoba workers come home safe.

Jennifer Howard
Minister, Manitoba Family Services and Labour

Building on Safety Success

Since 2000 Manitoba has:

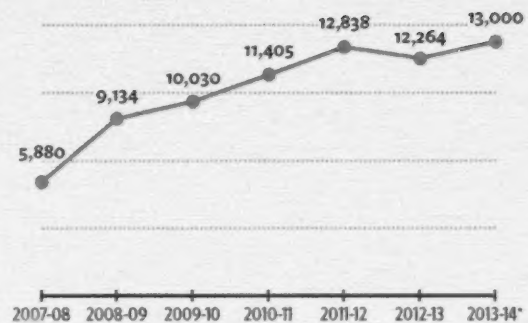
- ✓ **Doubled the ranks of safety and health staff**
- ✓ **Increased annual workplace inspections** by a factor of five, with increased inspection and enforcement in high-hazard industries
- ✓ **Strengthened protections for most-at-risk workers** by increasing enforcement in workplaces most likely to employ new, young and immigrant employees
- ✓ **Bolstered training and awareness** across the province, including the SAFE Work public awareness campaign, recognized by over 80 per cent of Manitobans
- ✓ **Renewed safety and health laws** to better respond to emerging workplace issues, giving Manitobans some of the most up-to-date workplace safety legislation in Canada
- ✓ **Decreased the rate of time-loss injury**, even at a time of sustained employment growth across the province

MORE ENFORCEMENT, TOUGHER FINES

Apart from a significant increase in workplace inspections, Manitoba has increased the penalties for contravening the Workplace Safety and Health Act. In 2010 the maximum fine amounts were increased to \$250,000 and \$500,000 for repeat offences.

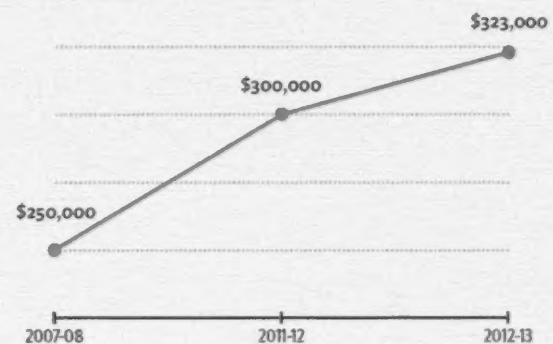


Workplace inspections

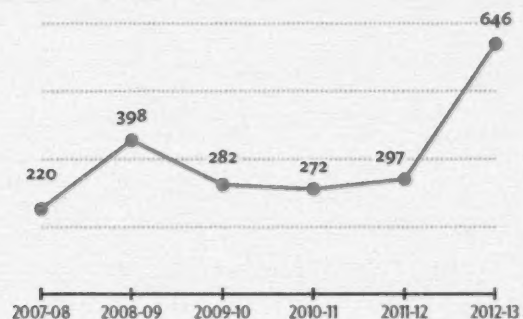


*PROJECTED

Combined WCB/Province of Manitoba annual funding for SAFE Workers of Tomorrow



Stop work orders



Manitoba's Five-Year Plan for Workplace Injury and Illness Prevention reflects the most comprehensive consultation with stakeholders to date, as well as the independent recommendations of a noted Canadian expert on workplace compensation systems.

In 2012, Manitoba's Minister of Family Services and Labour ordered a series of reviews, the findings and recommendations from which underpin the strategies outlined in this document. The reviews yielded a detailed analysis of Manitoba's approach to workplace health and safety and included recommendations to further strengthen *The Workplace Safety and Health Act*; recommendations to strengthen injury and illness prevention across all workplace sectors; and recommendations around the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) process for setting employer rates to create stronger incentives for genuine injury prevention.

More than four dozen stakeholder associations were consulted over the course of the reviews, both in Winnipeg and Brandon and also in rural communities and the North. Groups consulted included major employer organizations, individual private- and public-sector employers in high-hazard industries, labour associations representing unionized workplace sectors, workplace safety and health associations, provincial Workplace Safety and Health personnel including Manitoba's safety and health officers, the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba and various community groups and associations.



Based on this broad-based consultation with Manitobans, *Manitoba's Five-Year Plan for Workplace Injury and Illness Prevention* is centered on four key principles:

1. MAKING MANITOBA A PREVENTION LEADER

Reducing workplace injury and illness begins with effective tools to build a strong culture of workplace safety. A workplace culture that prioritizes genuine injury prevention means Manitoba workers can return home safe at the end of each shift. Effective prevention is good for families, it's good for our communities and it's good for business. Manitoba's new five-year plan commits the government to further strengthening prevention efforts across all workplace sectors, with meaningful incentive and reward for employers who take genuine steps to improve workplace safety and tougher penalties for those who don't.

2. IMPROVED SERVICES, WHERE THEY'RE NEEDED MOST

Manitoba's five-year plan affirms the government's commitment to ensuring that safety and health programs reflect workplace realities and meet the evolving needs of both workers and employers. Creating a culture of prevention means further strengthening opportunities for accessible, flexible training; focusing efforts where they're needed most such as high-hazard industries and workplaces that employ most-at-risk workers; and improving system-wide responsiveness for all stakeholders via distinct, dedicated resources both for enforcement and prevention.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY, BALANCE AND FAIRNESS

A system that is balanced, open and fair to all is essential to changing attitudes toward meaningful injury and illness prevention. A stronger link between incentives and genuine prevention, tougher enforcement and improved public reporting will ensure greater accountability among all workplace stakeholders.

4. A STRONGER ROLE FOR ALL WORKPLACE STAKEHOLDERS

All safety stakeholders – employers, workers, government and the public – must be empowered to play a greater role in making Manitoba a safer place to work. Manitoba's five-year plan is focused on preserving the gains our province has made in making work healthier and safer while creating new tools to give every Manitoban a clear role to play in reducing injury and illness. Making our province a nationally recognized safety leader and creating a lasting culture of safety is a shared responsibility that requires the commitment of all.

Ten Action Areas for a Safer Manitoba

DOUBLING MANITOBA'S INVESTMENT IN PREVENTION

Consolidating prevention resources will mean both a dedicated revenue stream and dedicated personnel for workplace injury and illness prevention. Over the next five years, prevention funding will be fully doubled, with the guaranteed annual revenue stream for prevention services enshrined in legislation.

1 | DEDICATED PREVENTION SERVICES

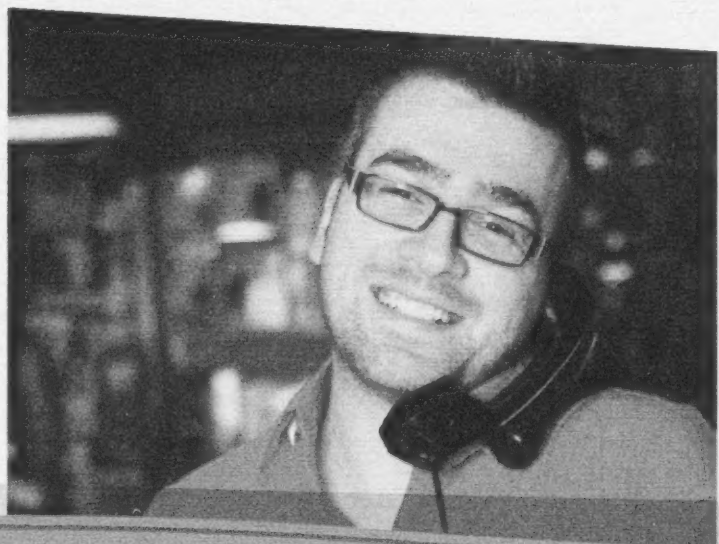
Manitoba's workplace stakeholders agree on the need to establish a clear distinction between prevention services and enforcement activities. Unifying and consolidating prevention services will make services easier to access, more responsive and better tailored to the individual needs of each industry and workplace.

Consolidating and strengthening Manitoba's prevention infrastructure will:

- Improve service delivery and access by creating a single point of contact for prevention programs
- Strengthen system accountability and transparency by keeping prevention separate and distinct from compensation, with dedicated budgeting and reporting channels for prevention services
- Ensure greater oversight of prevention activities via a representative stakeholder body to guide operational and budgetary decisions
- Increase focus on developing targeted resources for workers most at risk of injury, including young workers, new workers and newcomers to Canada
- Improve employer engagement, in particular in higher-hazard sectors such as construction, manufacturing and agriculture
- Provide a substantial increase in overall resources for prevention without affecting enforcement services within Workplace Safety and Health
- Affirm Manitoba's position as a national leader in preventing workplace injury and illness

HIGHER-VISIBILITY ENFORCEMENT

Manitoba's safety and health officers log thousands of kilometres each year traveling to workplaces across the province. New high-visibility markings will turn inspectors' vehicles into an effective promotional tool for Manitoba's new one-stop safety number – reminding everyone that the tools for safer work are never more than a single phone call away.



2 | NATION-LEADING SAFETY AND HEALTH LAWS

Manitoba's continued commitment to reviewing and renewing workplace safety laws has given our province some of the most up-to-date safety and health legislation in Canada. The government will continue to renew and strengthen legislation to clarify responsibilities, enhance protections and ensure appropriate measures are taken in cases of flagrant disregard for worker safety. New legislation will deliver stronger, more immediate consequences for negligence and will provide for:

- Immediate fines for activities that present imminent risk to life or health
- Immediate penalties for backsliding after an improvement order has been issued
- Province-wide stop work orders for specific high-risk activities determined to place workers at imminent risk
- Stronger protections when a worker refuses unsafe work
- Tougher consequences for employers who punish workers for exercising their rights
- The enshrinement of workers' rights

The government will also strengthen efforts to:

- Ensure all partners are working together to prosecute serious offenders to the full extent of provincial and federal laws
- Improve services and supports for victims of workplace injury as well as victims' families in cases of serious injury or death

3 | NEW TOOLS TO STRENGTHEN ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING

Manitoba's chief prevention officer (CPO) will be mandated to improve the monitoring, reporting, coordination and system-wide accountability of prevention services. The CPO will be responsible for evaluating and publicly reporting each year on progress made around all actions committed to under Manitoba's five-year plan. The CPO will:

- Complete and deliver publicly an annual report on all aspects of injury and illness prevention
- Develop a consistent tool to measure and track the state of safety and health in Manitoba over time
- Monitor and report on progress on commitments made in the province's five-year action plan
- Annually review and report on serious incident details and injury data to more efficiently identify and respond to emerging trends
- Ensure the needs of both employers and workers are heard and equitably addressed as prevention services are consolidated and expanded

“We are definitely making progress around workplace safety but we still need to do more. We can never become complacent. Too often we still hear the term ‘accident’ when someone is hurt at work, but that term ignores the fact that safe work is about responsibility. Workplace safety is about being accountable for reducing hazards, effective supervision and training, and ensuring that all work can be performed safely. That’s why prevention is so important. Once someone has died or been injured on the job, it’s too late.”

Cindy Skanderberg, business owner, safety advocate and mother to Michael Skanderberg, who was electrocuted on the job in 1999

A STRONGER PUBLIC ROLE

Built on the success of effective public awareness campaigns such as the “tie one on” ads, the Manitoba government and WCB will provide more ways for the public to spot and report unsafe work. Improved reporting of unsafe work is key to strengthening a culture of safety and prevention, and affirms that staying safe on the job is everyone’s responsibility.



SAFETY RESOURCES FOR EVERY STUDENT

Safe work begins well before a new employee steps onto the job site. New injury and illness prevention resources will ensure every high-school student in Manitoba has access to workplace safety and health information. Flexible tools and resources will make it easier for every young person to access the information they need, both online or in the classroom.

EXPANDING MANITOBA’S SWOT TEAMS

The SAFE Workers of Tomorrow (SWOT) initiative is a true Manitoba success story: the costs of administering the program are modest despite a proven ability to connect young Manitobans with effective safety information and resources. Program staffing and resources will be increased to ensure that youth-oriented safety awareness training is available to every school or community organization that wants it.

4 | A RENEWED ROLE FOR BUSINESS AS A SAFETY PARTNER

Industry safety associations provide valuable services that make it easier for employers and employees to engage in positive safety and health practices. Manitoba will continue to support the work of existing safety associations and will directly support the development of more industry-based safety associations.

Resources will be focused on meaningful injury and illness prevention. The government will work with employers and employees to ensure standards for training programs are both consistent and effective.

Manitoba is committed to improving worker participation and involvement in establishing standards for training and services, and to ensuring additional training tools and practical, accessible resources are dedicated to specific industries and identified risks and hazards.

The government will also focus on strengthening supports for new businesses: Beginning in 2014, every new Manitoba business will receive a sector-specific package of workplace safety materials that will reduce barriers to accessing the prevention resources and training tools that keep workers safe.

5 | FOCUS ON MANITOBA’S MOST VULNERABLE WORKERS

Workplace safety is important in every workplace and at every age, although research makes clear that targeted prevention directed at young and new workers can reduce injuries among those at higher risk of getting hurt on the job. Effective training and enforcement ensures that Manitobans new to the workforce have the education and supervision they need to be safe on the job.

Newcomers are increasingly important to the province’s labour force, and Manitoba will continue to work with employer, labour and community partners to develop services and supports to meet the identified needs of newcomers and their employers.

The Manitoba government will:

- Make workplace safety orientations mandatory for every new worker, with the requirement enshrined in legislation
- Make more training and resources available in additional languages to ensure that language is never a barrier to on-the-job safety
- Empower parents with awareness materials that make it easier to talk to their kids about the right to safe work



6 | NEW TRAINING PROGRAMS; CONSISTENT TRAINING STANDARDS

The link between high-quality safety and health training and injury prevention is clear. Manitoba's five-year action plan commits the government to ensuring that all safety and health training meets or exceeds the current standards in place in any other Canadian jurisdiction.

Working collaboratively with workplace partners the government will develop consistent, uniform training standards with an aim to establishing accredited training services that will strengthen the resources available to workers and employers in all sectors and industries. Consolidation of prevention services will allow greater focus on delivering more accessible, innovative and flexible training options, while ensuring that industry-provided training is of the highest standard.

SAFE WORK ON WHEELS

Manitoba's consultation with workplace stakeholders revealed that a consistent barrier in some sectors was the employer's concern that safety training meant too much time that workers were away from the job – in particular in sectors that rely on seasonal work or where staff turnover is otherwise high. A new mobile safety lab pilot project, modeled on the proven success of fire-safety trailers, will bring basic safety awareness tools right to the worksite.

“Safety Services Manitoba believes that focusing on prevention will result in a safer Manitoba. High-quality training for both front-line workers and supervisors is an integral part of preventing workplace injuries. Every Manitoban should arrive home from work safely each and every day.”

Judy Murphy, president and chief executive officer, Safety Services Manitoba

New tools to identify where resources are needed most

Manitoba will develop a new survey tool, with a priority focus on higher-hazard industries, to significantly improve data on areas where prevention efforts are lacking, where stronger enforcement is needed and where meaningful prevention practices are having a positive impact and could be replicated elsewhere.

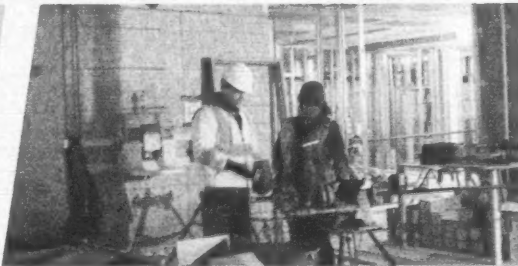
To encourage workplace participation the new prevention unit will develop and oversee a rewards system that connects completed surveys with financial benefit. The improved data generated by a significantly higher volume of completed surveys will ultimately mean better-focused enforcement, heightened awareness around safety rights and a more effective means to measure and report on prevention and enforcement year over year.

7 | STRONGER INCENTIVES FOR REAL PREVENTION

The Manitoba government believes that employers that minimize workplace risk should be recognized with appropriate reward, while all employers should similarly have effective incentive to adopt meaningful injury-prevention practices and programs.

Manitoba's new five-year plan will strengthen prevention by ensuring the WCB experience rating model translates into greater incentive to invest in safe work.

- Defined reward for employer-driven efforts that promote injury prevention and positive return-to-work practices
- Higher penalties when employers are found to have engaged in illegal activity by suppressing claims
- Additional investigation when allegations of claims suppression arise
- Improved clarity around the responsibilities of all workplace parties to report on-the-job injury, including targeted information campaigns in higher-risk industries to help all stakeholders understand, recognize and reduce claims suppression



Preventing injuries, not claims

Manitoba legislation makes clear that any action to minimize or impede the reporting of workplace injury is illegal under provincial law. Still, while most employers respect the law, the external Petrie report documented frequent incidents of "claims suppression" – efforts to discourage workers from reporting injuries, inappropriately aggressive return-to-work practices following an injury, and discouraging or hampering workers' ability to file an injury claim.

Claims suppression impedes legitimate injury and illness prevention. It makes our workplaces less safe, and it leaves safety-focused employers to unfairly subsidize those who attempt to hide or minimize claims. Manitoba's five-year plan commits the government and WCB to developing new tools that raise awareness around how to spot claims suppression, as well as tougher penalties for those who break the law by suppressing claims.

A fair structure for setting employer assessment rates

Based on the independent review of the WCB experience rating system, the Manitoba government is concerned that the current rate-setting structure inadvertently creates financial incentive to focus more on managing claims than on genuine injury and illness prevention. Apart from undermining effective safe-work practices and allowing some injuries to go unreported, the system imbalance also unfairly penalizes employers who obey the law.

The Manitoba government has asked the WCB to review and report back on recommendations made in the independent review in the fall of 2013 as the first steps toward a fairer rate model that will:

- Prioritize prevention and strengthen system accountability by ensuring employers are rewarded for safe workplaces, while removing financial incentives to minimize or suppress claims
- Restore balance to the rate-setting structure by ensuring employers who prioritize genuine workplace safety and prevention are not left to subsidize those who do not
- Keep Manitoba's rates among the lowest in Canada

“Manitoba’s current experience-rating system emphasizes claims cost control after an injury occurs. My recommendations are designed to minimize claims suppression activity where it exists, to provide incentives to prevent injuries wherever possible and, where injuries do occur, to restore the worker to safe, productive employment as soon as practical.”

British Columbia-based safety expert **Paul Petrie**, author of the external review of Manitoba’s Workers Compensation Board assessment rate model

8 | IMPROVED SUPPORTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Small business owners have made clear their commitment to providing a safe working environment for their employees but often lack the internal resources to deliver effective prevention programs. Consolidating prevention services will allow more targeted focus on ensuring small businesses receive the support and resources they need, including flexible, practical tools to make their workplaces safer.



ONE-STOP SAFETY

No company or employee should encounter barriers to making work safer. A new single-number information system dedicated to employers and workers will provide an easy, single point of access for all safety services, from information on training and prevention to injury reporting. The new one-number system will make safer work easier for everyone, and will better meet the need of workplaces with limited resources such as small business.

SHOWCASING EFFECTIVE SAFETY LEADERSHIP

Safety-minded employers know that injury and illness prevention is both good for their employees and good for business. A new corporate leadership team comprised of executives committed to genuine prevention will take on a mentoring role for other business owners. This new executive team will share effective, innovative practices through events such as an annual safety and health conference where best practices could be showcased.



NEW SUPPORTS FOR FRONT-LINE RESPONDERS

Firefighters, paramedics and others who routinely face high-trauma situations endure unique workplace challenges that too often go unseen. The mental-health impacts following a traumatic event are very real and can last long after the event occurs. New supports will raise awareness of workplace mental health for front-line personnel who routinely face traumatic events, with new resources for effective follow-up after a traumatic event occurs and improved access to workers' compensation benefits.



9 | ADDRESSING WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, nearly a quarter of the country's working population is currently affected by a mental-health challenge. Mental illness is one of the leading reasons for sick leave and disability claims in Canadian workplaces. Manitoba recognizes the importance of mental health and wellbeing in creating safer and healthier places to work. The new five-year plan commits Manitoba to become a leader in effective workplace mental health programs and services to help workers and employers better respond to a growing challenge.

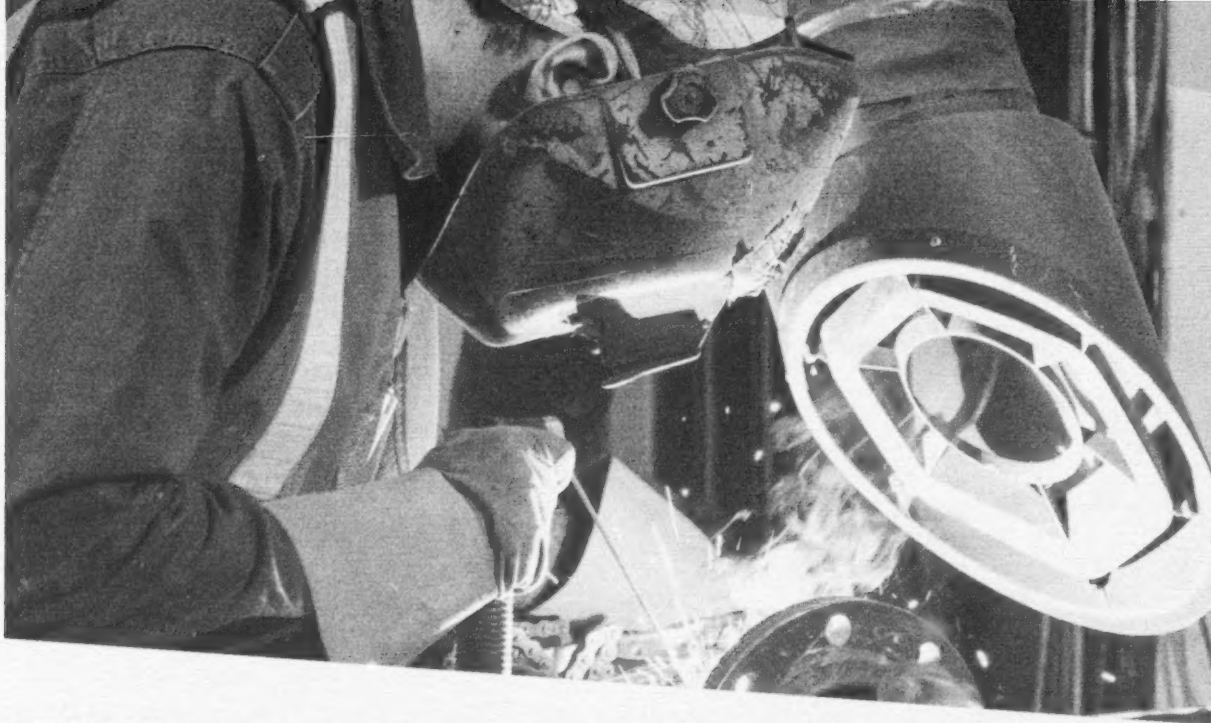
Working with stakeholders, immediate steps will include:

- Developing a toolkit of practical resources that can be used across industries to promote mental health in the workplace
- Better education and enforcement to help prevent psychological harassment and violence in the workplace



"All workers have the right to a safe and healthy workplace. A fair system is one that rewards employers for genuine injury and illness prevention activities, and gets tough on those who flout safety rules."

Kevin Rebeck, president, Manitoba Federation of Labour



10 | MEASURING SUCCESS

Workers and employers are entitled to accurate, timely information about the state of workplace safety and health in our province. Measuring the impact of injury and illness prevention efforts is essential to gauge whether resources are effective and that workplaces are in fact getting safer.

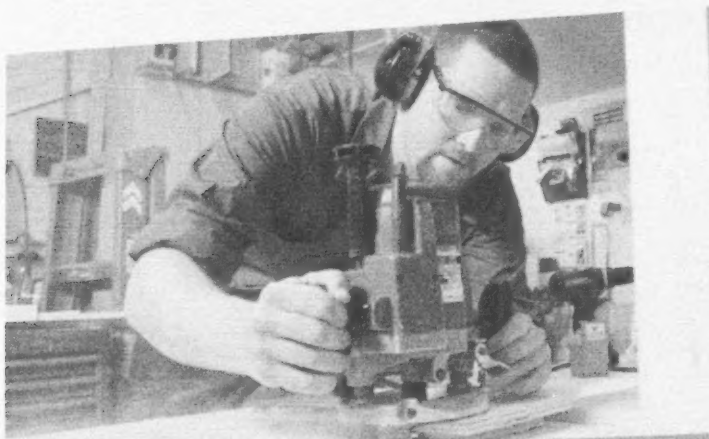
To better monitor and track workplace injury and illness prevention, Manitoba will:

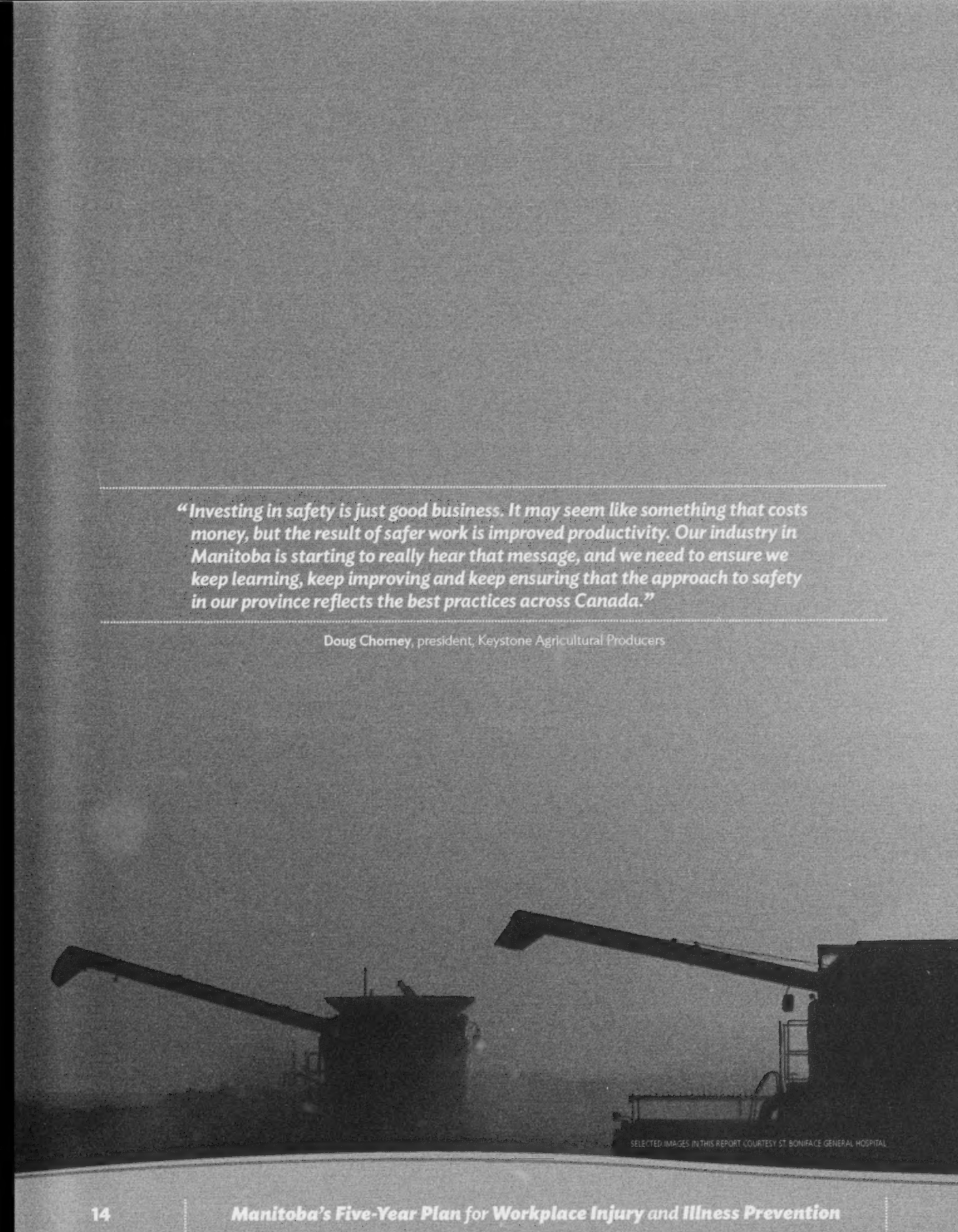
- **Develop new indicators that reflect:**

- Attitudes and awareness around injury and illness prevention
- The adoption of training programs, tools and resources
- The effectiveness of safety and health committees and involvement of workplace parties
- Compliance with workplace safety laws

- **Build on existing indicators, including:**

- The frequency and nature of workplace inspections and convictions
- The number and cause of workplaces injuries and illness





"Investing in safety is just good business. It may seem like something that costs money, but the result of safer work is improved productivity. Our industry in Manitoba is starting to really hear that message, and we need to ensure we keep learning, keep improving and keep ensuring that the approach to safety in our province reflects the best practices across Canada."

Doug Chorney, president, Keystone Agricultural Producers

SELECTED IMAGES IN THIS REPORT COURTESY ST. BONIFACE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Manitoba's Five-Year Plan for Workplace Injury and Illness Prevention will empower Manitobans to work together to make our province the safest place to work in North America.

Key actions to create a genuine culture of safety and reduce workplace injury include:

MAKING MANITOBA A PREVENTION LEADER

- ☐ Consolidating prevention services with dedicated revenue stream for prevention and training
- ☐ Doubling annual funding for prevention, with prevention-specific funding protected by legislation
- ☐ Mandatory safety orientations for every new worker
- ☐ SAFE Workers of Tomorrow programming available to every Manitoba classroom
- ☐ Immediate penalties for safety violations that present imminent risk to life or health
- ☐ Tougher penalties for backsliding following an improvement order
- ☐ Stronger resources to address workplace mental health, bullying and harassment in the workplace
- ☐ Legislation that enshrines workers' rights, delivers stronger protections when unsafe work is refused, and ensures workers are paid for safety training
- ☐ Rewards system for employers who invest in prevention and create a culture of workplace safety

IMPROVED SERVICES, WHERE THEY'RE NEEDED MOST

- ☐ One-stop phone number/single point of access for all prevention services, training and injury reporting
- ☐ Uniform training standards to ensure training offered to employers and workers is consistent, effective and up to date
- ☐ Safe-work resources for every new Manitoba business, and new tools for small business
- ☐ Online training and mobile training to make safe-work tools easier to access
- ☐ Safety training available in additional languages to ensure new Manitobans are safer on the job

ACCOUNTABILITY, BALANCE AND FAIRNESS

- ☐ Clear rewards for reducing injuries, not claims
- ☐ Improved WCB funding model to ensure any financial incentives are more directly linked to a strong safety culture
- ☐ Ensure Manitoba WCB rates remain among lowest in Canada
- ☐ Higher penalties for breaking the law by suppressing injury claims
- ☐ New workplace survey tool to identify where prevention is lax and enforcement should be higher
- ☐ Improved annual reporting around training, prevention, enforcement, fines and attitudes toward workplace safety

A STRONGER ROLE FOR ALL WORKPLACE STAKEHOLDERS

- ☐ New campaigns to ensure members of the public can report unsafe work
- ☐ More opportunities for employer and worker input into creating safety culture
- ☐ Resources for parents to talk to their kids about right to safe work
- ☐ Representative stakeholder body to ensure greater oversight of prevention activities
- ☐ New business leadership team to share best practices on injury and illness prevention



Manitoba Family Services and Labour

204-945-3744 | 1-866-626-4862

www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety

www.safemanitoba.com

